

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 39- 44 are pending in this application. By this amendment, no claims are amended; Claims 33-37 are canceled; and Claims 39-44 are added herewith. Support for the present amendment can be found in the original specification, for example, at page 7, line 7 to page 8, line 11, at page 9, lines 14-26, at page 10, lines 13-16, at page 12, lines 8-24, at page 41, line 14 to page 42, line 4, in original claims 1-22, and in Figures 1A-16B. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 33-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 33-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,995,430 to Bonora (herein "Bonora"); and Claims 35-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Bonora in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,419,482 to Sakata (herein "Sakata").

In response to the rejection of Claims 33-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, it is noted that Claims 33-37 are canceled and new Claims 39-44 do not recite "the cleaning box" in line 3. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are definite, and no further rejection on that basis is anticipated. However, if the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, who will be happy to work with the Examiner in a joint effort to derive mutually acceptable language.

New independent Claim 39 recites in part "the port door and the lid are coupled therewith by rotating the rotating shaft to engage the protrusion with the non-circular shaped receiving hole and thereby the raising/ lowering device exerts a down force onto the lid." The applied art does not discuss a port door and a lid coupled with these features.

Instead, Bonora discusses a bottom door 32 having a latch mechanism 80 operated by pins 70 provided on a port door 28. The pins 70 are inserted into the cam holes 132 of the latch operation member. The pins 70 as described by Bonora do not transfer a down force from the port door 28 to open the door 32.

Sakata does not discuss this feature either and instead discusses a key member 26 which engages a lock plate 16 on a horizontally-facing lid 10 and is thereby unable to exert a down force onto the lid 10 (see Figure 6).

Further, Claim 39 recites, in part, “a raising/ lowering device... includes... a latch pin for rotating the cam plate and having a protrusion fittingly inserted into a non-circular shaped receiving hole provided onto the lid, and the latch pin is located at a position *displaced* from the protrusion.” The applied art does not discuss this feature. Specifically, Bonora discusses pins 70 to engage cam holes 132 associated with the latch mechanism 80 (see col. 8, lines 9-10 and Fig. 4), and not latch pins displaced from a protrusion. Sakata discusses two key members 26 engaging lock plates 16 on a horizontally-facing lid 10, and not latch pins displaced from a protrusion.

Claim 41 recites, in part, “an operation to move the latch member to protrude from the lid and an engagement between the brim portion of the protrusion and the seat of the non-circular shaped receiving hole are simultaneously executed by the rotation of the rotating shaft.” The applied art does not discuss the feature of simultaneous execution by a rotation of the rotating shaft.

It is noted that new Claims 40-44 depend from Claim 39 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 39.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

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Reply to Office Action of March 13, 2009

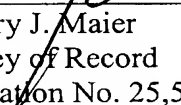
Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.


Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Kevin M. McKinley
Registration No. 43,794